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Sixth Committee
Measures to eliminate international terrorism
Statement by Norway on behalf of the Nordic countries

M(r/s). Chair,

I have the honour to address the Sixth Committee on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

Terrorism and violent extremism constitute significant transnational threats. They jeopardise both the national security of Member States and the safety of citizens. To effectively address these threats to international peace and security, cooperation through and within the United Nations is essential.

We unequivocally reject and condemn all forms of terrorism in the strongest terms. This condemnation also extends to violent right-wing extremism, a threat that remains relevant to many countries, including the Nordic. The occurrence of several mass casualty attacks underscores the need for comprehensive and long-term focus countering this menace.

M(r/s). Chair,

ISIL and al-Qaeda continue to constitute a serious threat to global peace and security. Despite ISIL's territorial defeats in Syria and Iraq, it remains a considerable security challenge in the region and beyond. IS Khorasan Province continue to demonstrate intent and capability to conduct acts of terrorism at home and abroad.

Both al-Qaeda and ISIL have demonstrated a clear strategic interest in Africa, by expanding their network of affiliates in fragile states and capitalising on weak governance, local grievances, poverty, and conflicts. Their presence in and outreach from the Horn of Africa is a matter of growing concern. Equally, the deteriorating security situation in the Sahel remains worrying. So too is the spill-over to West-African coastal states.

Military coups undermine state legitimacy and represent a significant risk to the effectiveness of prevention efforts and counter-terrorism interventions. Russia adds another layer of concern in the Sahel region, through its reported interference in political processes, disinformation campaigns, and its disruptive activities.

In our fight against terrorism, we are obliged to abide by international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights, and the rule of law.

M(r/s). Chair,

The Nordic countries place great importance on preventing violent extremism, as well as sustaining such efforts through a whole of society approach.

Rather than disproportionately focusing on security-centred interventions, our collective efforts to eliminate international terrorism should have robust prevention strategies as the point of departure, giving the root causes particular consideration.

Governments alone cannot eliminate terrorism. To be effective, national initiatives and interventions must be designed and implemented with the support from, and in a collaboration with, local communities. We applaud civil society actors, community leaders, schoolteachers, health workers, youth representatives, religious leaders, municipality workers and all others acting as the first line of defence against those who instigate hate.

Children's and youths' experiences of hate and racism must be considered in the preventive work. We should engage them in meaningful discussions on how to diminish the influence of violent extremist ideologies, both at the local level as well as online.

The resilience of children against violent extremism must be increased. It is our duty to prevent and respond to violence against children by terrorist and violent extremist groups, including recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. Vulnerable children and young people must be protected, and education must be protected from attacks.

M(r/s). Chair,

The Nordic countries will continue to support the work of the Secretary General, the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities in their efforts to coordinate interventions, ensuring that all UN entities truly deliver as one. We appreciate the UN's important efforts in promoting compliance. It is imperative that all counter-terrorism measures comply with our obligations under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Failing to do so is detrimental to the legitimacy of governments and global institutions and will ultimately undermine our efforts.

In this context, we also welcome the positive outcome of the negotiations on the pan-European legal definition of terrorism, to be included in the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, as a regional means to promote legal certainty.

Thank you, m(r/s). Chair.